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RUEHLMC/MILLENNIUM CHALLENGE CORP WASHINGTON DC PRIORITY 0853
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RHEHAAA/THE WHITE HOUSE WASHDC PRIORITY
RUMIAAA/USOUTHCOM MIAMI FL PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L TEGUCIGALPA 001134

SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: DECL: 12/15/2018

TAGS: PREL PGOV EFIN KDEM NU VE HO

SUBJECT: PRESIDENT ZELAYA AGAIN CRITICIZES U.S. POLICY IN NICARAGUA

REF: A. TEGUCIGALPA 1064
1B. TEGUCIGALPA 1040

Classified By: Ambassador Hugo Llorens, reason 1.4 (b & d)

11. (U) During a brief visit to Costa Rica for a graduation ceremony, President Manuel "Mel" Zelaya made statements on December 14 against U.S. policy in Nicaragua. He said Honduras "laments" that the United States has intervened in an electoral process by questioning the outcome. Zelaya said that the people of Nicaragua and its President, Daniel Ortega, must be respected and left to resolve their own situation, and that all the countries of Central America will join together, if necessary, to support Nicaragua and Daniel Ortega, as the country's elected leader.

12. (C) Comment: Zelaya's statement reflects his attempts to stay in good graces with ALBA. Despite having signed on to ALBA in August, Zelaya has done little to move the Honduras' policies closer to that of Venezuela and its allies, and has worked to maintain good relations with the U.S. His principal support for ALBA appear to be occasional statements against international capitalism and recent swings at us on Nicaragua. The Ambassador personally took Zelaya to task (Ref A) after his first set of remarks on Nicaragua (Ref B) and provided him with information on irregularities in that countries' municipal elections. We will continue to raise with Zelaya and the GOH our concerns about the threats to democracy in Nicaragua. End Comment.

LLORENS